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Colorado Sportsmen Support EPA Findings in Bristol Bay Analysis

39 hunting and fishing organizations and businesses urge protection of the region

DENVER – The Bull Moose Sportsmen’s Alliance, along with thirty-eight Colorado outdoor groups and leaders, today endorsed the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) watershed assessment of Bristol Bay, Alaska, which is home to one of the most productive native salmon fisheries in the world and threatened by the proposed Pebble Mine.

The EPA assessment, released earlier this week, provides a comprehensive evaluation of potential impacts to the watersheds and the fisheries of the proposed Pebble Mine in Bristol Bay. The watershed assessment found that Bristol Bay’s wild salmon fishery is a one-of-a-kind with up to 40 million sockeye salmon returning annually. It also indicated that the proposed mine would have a significant impact on the water quality and the habitat that sustains Alaska’s unique game populations.

“I have heard from sportsmen across Colorado who have urged protection for Bristol Bay. This world-class fishing destination deserves to be recognized as the economic driver that it is,” said Senator Michael Bennet.

Supportive Colorado sportsmen are also urging the agency to take the next logical step to protect Bristol Bay from inappropriate mining development by crafting restrictions that would protect Bristol Bay’s wild salmon population and the local economies supported by the fishery.

Thirty-nine Colorado-based outdoor and retail organizations and businesses, including Scott Fly Rod Company, Colorado Trout Unlimited, and Trout’s Fly Fishing, signed a letter urging EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson “to use all the tools at your disposal to protect a sport fishing and hunting destination that is unrivaled in America and perhaps the world, for this and future generations of sportsmen and women.”

“Bristol Bay is the crown jewel of Alaska's sport fishing, attracting anglers and fishing guides from around the globe - including nearly 11,000 anglers from Colorado in 2010,” said Jim Bartschi, President of Colorado-based Scott Fly Rod Company. **“Ensuring Bristol**



Bay's protection is not only critical to anglers throughout Colorado and the nation but also for local businesses and economies."

Another 19 national sporting organizations also signed the letter, including the Colorado-based American Fly Fishing Trade Association, the Dallas Safari Club, and the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership. In total, over 525 hunting and angling groups and businesses support action by the EPA to protect Bristol Bay.

"Colorado's sportsmen and women understand that Bristol Bay is a unique place with incomparable fish and wildlife habitat," said Gaspar Perricone, director of the Bull Moose Sportsmen's Alliance. **"They are fighting to protect these abundant natural resources from the threats of a massive open-pit mine."**

The proposed Pebble Mine poses numerous significant and potentially long-lasting threats to Bristol Bay's nine major rivers and a wetland preserve larger than the state of Kentucky. The mine would cover 28 square miles of land, including an open-pit up to 4,000 feet deep and 2.3 miles wide. It would require nine linear miles of earthen dams up to 740-feet tall to store and treat 10 billion tons of acid-laced mine waste forever.

Following the release of the assessment, under section 404 (c) of the Clean Water Act, the EPA can now prescribe specific conditions that would limit or prevent the development of mega-scale hard rock mines such as the Pebble project or deny required federal dredge and fill permits for toxic material.

The EPA is taking public comments on the [draft Bristol Bay watershed assessment](#) through July 23.

*For more information visit www.BullMooseSportsmen.org or contact
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